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Testimony of Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Public Hearing Subject Matter	Position
H.B. 5312: AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES REGARDING THE MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES.	Opposed to Section 6

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) is the first conservation organization established in Connecticut in 1895. For over 120 years, CFPA has offered testimony before the General Assembly on various State Park and Forest, trail recreation, sustainable forestry, and land conservation issues.

One of the most positive achievements of the FY 2018-2019 Budget agreed to in October, 2017 was the Passport to the Parks. As you know, the Passport to the Parks is supported by a \$10 fee on DMV registrations, and in return, all Connecticut residents receive the benefit of no parking fee (a.k.a. free entry) to all State Parks. This is an amazing benefit to the public, and this fee is quite reasonable to provide a new, more sustainable funding source for the operation and maintenance of Connecticut's State Parks.

That is why we are concerned by the language put forward in **Section 6 of HB 5312** that would weaken the stability of both the Passport to the Parks Fee as well as the Clean Air Act Fee by removing the existing provisions that would prohibit refunds on these fees. This seems to open the door for offering refunds or allowing exceptions to the current fees which would not only siphon funds away from State Parks and Clean Air programs, but would create additional time-consuming headaches for the DMV to administer.

Please don't monkey around with the Passport to the Parks Fee or the Clean Air Act Fee, and **we urge you to remove Section 6 from HB 5312.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony, and I am glad to respond to any questions you may have.